



Writing FAQs

Self-management website for people who have had a stroke www.selfhelp4stroke.org

Topic 4 Emotional Support

Q1. How will I know when writing to heal might be a good idea?

Be guided by your own sense of what's not feeling right. A good indicator of readiness to write is the feeling that something has been bothering you and keeping you awake at night. Other indicators are losing concentration easily and sensing that you have thoughts and feelings churning in your head.

Q2. What do I need to get started?

Some paper or a notebook and pen or you could type into your computer or talk into a recording device.

Q3. How long and when should I write?

Set aside 15 to 20 minutes for 3 days in a row (or once a week for 3 consecutive weeks). Time of day doesn't matter but you may want to make sure you won't be disturbed.

Q4. Is there a best place to write?

Where is a personal choice? Some people prefer safe comfortable areas, others a cafe or in the park.

Q5. What do I write about?

You might want to write about your stroke and how you live with it. Alternatively, you may wish to write about another significant event. What you choose to write about could be from the recent past or from a very long time ago. Ideally, it should be something you haven't shared very much about with anyone else. However, even if you have shared your significant event with others you may still feel you would benefit from writing a story about it.

Q6. Can I write about more than one thing?

It is best to write about the same event across the 3 days. However, if you have found this writing activity useful and have other event(s) you would like to process then by all means engage in more 3 day writing sessions. Just remember to follow the guidance across the 3 days as faithfully as you can.

Q7. I'm worried that if I do this I will feel worse

It is quite normal to feel a bit low after writing about upsetting and significant events. It is wise to keep in mind the 'looking after yourself' statements listed in the Key Point box in this section.

Q8. What do I do when I have finished the 3 days?

It depends what you want to do with your story. You can get rid of it, or re-read and review it – looking at it to see if your thoughts or feelings have changed or moved on in some way.